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CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE AGENCY
OFFICE OF NATIONAL ESTIMATES

24 October 1967

MEMORANDUM

SUBJECT: Security Conditions in Malaysia and Indonesia

1. Malaysia. The principal security threat in Malaysia is likely to come from the small but vocal leftwing opposition which strongly opposes US policy in Vietnam. The activists within this opposition are predominantly ethnic Chinese youths who adhere to the militant doctrines of Mao's "Red Guard" movement.

2. In Kuala Lumpur and elsewhere in peninsular Malaysia, these pro-Communist activists have adopted "mass action" tactics -- demonstrations, riots, strikes, and isolated acts of violence and hooliganism -- designed to advertise their cause, provoke the government and the police, and create an impression of Malaysia as a politically unstable police state. It is likely that these extremists will use the occasion of the Vice President's visit to further these same objectives as well as to show their hostility to the US. Demonstrations are likely and may involve clashes with police and security personnel and actions against US or Malaysian Government installations. MORI/CDF

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3. Security during the visit will be the responsibility of the Royal Malaysian Police (RMP), a generally efficient and experienced force. Some of its units are well-equipped and trained for riot control and have an excellent capability for swift response to fast-breaking situations. Intelligence functions of the RMP are concentrated in its Special Branch and are highly developed. The RMP will cooperate closely with US officials. If given advance notice, the police are in a position to detain leftist leaders and other extremists who might be expected to cause trouble during the Vice President's visit. While the RMP may not be able to exercise full control over all demonstrations, we believe it will be able to insure the personal safety of the Vice President.

4. Indonesia. In Djakarta, selected units of the Indonesian Army will probably have the major security responsibility during the Vice President's visit; the local police forces are relatively weak and ineffective, and to some degree politically unreliable in the eyes of the Suharto regime. The army has frequently demonstrated its ability to cope with large-scale demonstrations, though in the relatively permissive atmosphere of the past two years, it has not always been able to predict their size and scope. In this instance, however, the military will be particularly alert and unlikely to be

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caught unaware. For their part, any potential demonstrators will be cautious for fear of subsequent reprisal by the military. The power of the generals is such that any group of dissidents, for example, opponents of the US position in Vietnam, would not demonstrate without securing prior approval. Such approval, while it might be forthcoming, would severely limit the anti-US activity in scope and duration.

5. Indonesians and their government tend to be ambivalent about the war in Vietnam. While there is considerable opposition to communism and particularly the Chinese Communists, there is much sympathy for North Vietnam as a small Asian state in a fight with a powerful Western nation. The Suharto government, moreover, is attempting to establish itself as a potential mediator in the war and tries to avoid close identification with US Vietnam policy. It is also concerned lest the Russians and other East Europeans judge Indonesia as too pro-West and cut off shipments of military supplies. For these reasons, Suharto may permit small-scale demonstrations opposing US policy in Vietnam. These will, as noted above, be carefully controlled; Suharto is even more concerned to avoid jeopardizing expected US economic assistance. We do not believe, therefore, that any incident is likely to occur in Djakarta which will jeopardize the safety of the Vice President.

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6. Though the Indonesian Army is capable of maintaining good security for the Vice President anywhere in the country, its problems would be compounded in certain cities of Central and East Java (e.g., Surabaya). In these districts, pro-Sukarno, anti-US, and even pro-Communist sentiment remains strong; the Vice President would probably be received with substantial local hostility.

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